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NEWS RELEASE

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OAK PARK CRACK DEALER CONVICTED

Sacramento federal jury convicts Harvey Lee Sewell, Jr. of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that Harvey Lee SEWELL, Jr., also known as “JR,” 45, of Sacramento, was convicted today of five counts of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine and distribution of crack cocaine. The guilty verdict was returned by a federal jury in Sacramento after an eight-day trial before United States District Judge Lawrence K. Karlton.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, members of the Sacramento High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area team (“H.I.D.T.A.”), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Jason Hitt and William Wong, who prosecuted the case, the evidence introduced at trial showed that beginning in August of 2005 and continuing until a search on January 11, 2006, SEWELL was the architect of a crack cocaine distribution ring responsible for selling thousands of dollars worth of crack cocaine every day in South Sacramento. SEWELL’s crack business operated from various rooms in the River City Motel located at 4700 Stockton Boulevard in Sacramento.

During the conspiracy, SEWELL traveled to the Bay Area cities of Oakland and Richmond to obtain up to 15 ounces of powder cocaine from his drug suppliers. SEWELL would then transport the cocaine to a “stash pad” at an Extended Stay Motel located near Arden Fair Mall. At the Extended Stay

Motel, SEWELL would convert the powder cocaine into crack cocaine. SEWELL then packaged the crack and delivered large packages of it to his crew members inside the River City Motel. During trial, witnesses described SEWELL, known by his nickname “JR,” as a well-known, long-time drug dealer in the Oak Park area of Sacramento who, in addition to his crack business, distributed large quantities of methamphetamine.

SEWELL’s previous criminal record includes three prior felony convictions for crack cocaine sales and one prior conviction for robbery.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Karlton on April 29, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

The maximum statutory penalty for a violation of conspiracy to distribute at least 50 grams of crack cocaine in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 846 and 841(a)(1) is life in prison. The maximum statutory penalty for a violation of distribution of at least five grams of crack cocaine in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1) is up to 40 years in prison. In this case, SEWELL faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years in federal prison on the conspiracy count based upon his prior convictions and the amount of crack cocaine involved in the conspiracy. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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